

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claims 1-17 stand rejected under U.S.C. §103 as being obvious. Applicants respectfully traverse.

35 U.S.C. §112

In the Office Action dated July 17, 2006, claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 12 is directed toward an auxiliary equipment module having a plurality of electronic components, and communicating a signal through a common bus. In rejecting claim 12, the Examiner noted differences between claim 12 and subject matter disclosed in FIG. 1. Claim 12, however, is free of informalities and is sufficiently definite so as to point out and distinctly claim subject matter that Applicants regard as their invention. Moreover, FIG. 3 and the associated discussion in Applicants' specification disclose an illustrative embodiment of an auxiliary equipment module with adequate description for original claim 12. Accordingly, claim 12 complies with 35 U.S.C. §112, and hence Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 12 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) being obvious over "Applicants Admitted Prior Art" (i.e., specification page 1, lines 8-15; Fig 10) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,902,433 to Hashimoto et al. ("Hashimoto"). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claims 1-4

Independent claim 1 is directed toward an electronic connector connected to a sensor or switch, and communicating a signal through a common bus. The connector of claim 1 includes an I/O unit receiving a signal from the sensor or the switch and a control unit generating a control signal for controlling the driving of a load. The connector of claim 1 further recites a communication unit having "a function of decoding the control signal, and transmitting the control signal to an equipment connected to the corresponding load through the common bus."

The specification at page 1, lines 8-15 and Fig 10 disclose a drive portion 233 connected via a connector 230 to a load 134 by a wire harness, but fail to disclose a

“communication unit” or “common bus”, as recited by claim 1. Hashimoto which is directed toward a connector receptacle for high-speed transmission of data fails to remedy this deficiency. Accordingly, the cited disclosure and Hashimoto alone or in any combination fail to disclose or suggest all the limitations recited by claim 1, and thus there is insufficient factual support to sustain the *Prima Facie Case* of obviousness. For at least this reason, Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-4, which depend from claim 1, are believed to be patentable over the cited disclosure and Hashimoto for the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for the respective features recited by each dependent claim.

Claims 5-11

Independent claim 5 is directed toward an electronic connector connected to a load, and communicating a signal through a common bus. Claim 5 recites an electronic connector having, “a communication unit, receiving a control signal for controlling the driving of the load through the common bus.” The disclosure of specification page 1, lines 8-15 and Fig 10 does not disclose the “communication unit” or “common bus” of claim 5. Hashimoto which is directed toward a connector receptacle for high-speed transmission of a data fails to remedy this deficiency. Accordingly, the cited disclosure and Hashimoto, alone or in any combination, fail to disclose or suggest all the limitations recited by claim 5. Hence, there is insufficient factual support to sustain the *Prima Facie Case* of obviousness, and Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 6-11, which depend from claim 5, are believed to be patentable over the cited disclosure and Hashimoto for the same reasons as claim 5, as well as for the respective features recited by each dependent claim.

Claims 12-17

Independent claim 12 is directed toward an auxiliary equipment module having, “a communication unit, receiving a control signal for controlling the driving of the load through the common bus.” The disclosure of specification page 1, lines 8-15 and Fig 10 does not disclose an auxiliary equipment module. Nor does specification page 1, lines 8-15 and Fig 10

disclose a “communication unit” or “common bus” as recited by claim 12. Hashimoto fails to remedy this deficiency. Because the cited disclosure and Hashimoto alone or in any combination do not disclose or suggest all the limitations of claim 12, there is insufficient factual support to sustain the *Prima Facie Case* of obviousness. Hence, Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 13-17, which depend from claim 12, are believed to be patentable over the cited disclosure and Hashimoto for the same reasons as claim 12, as well as for the respective features recited by each dependent claim.

CONCLUSION


In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and thus request reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: October 3, 2006

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